

CANADIAN JOURNEY

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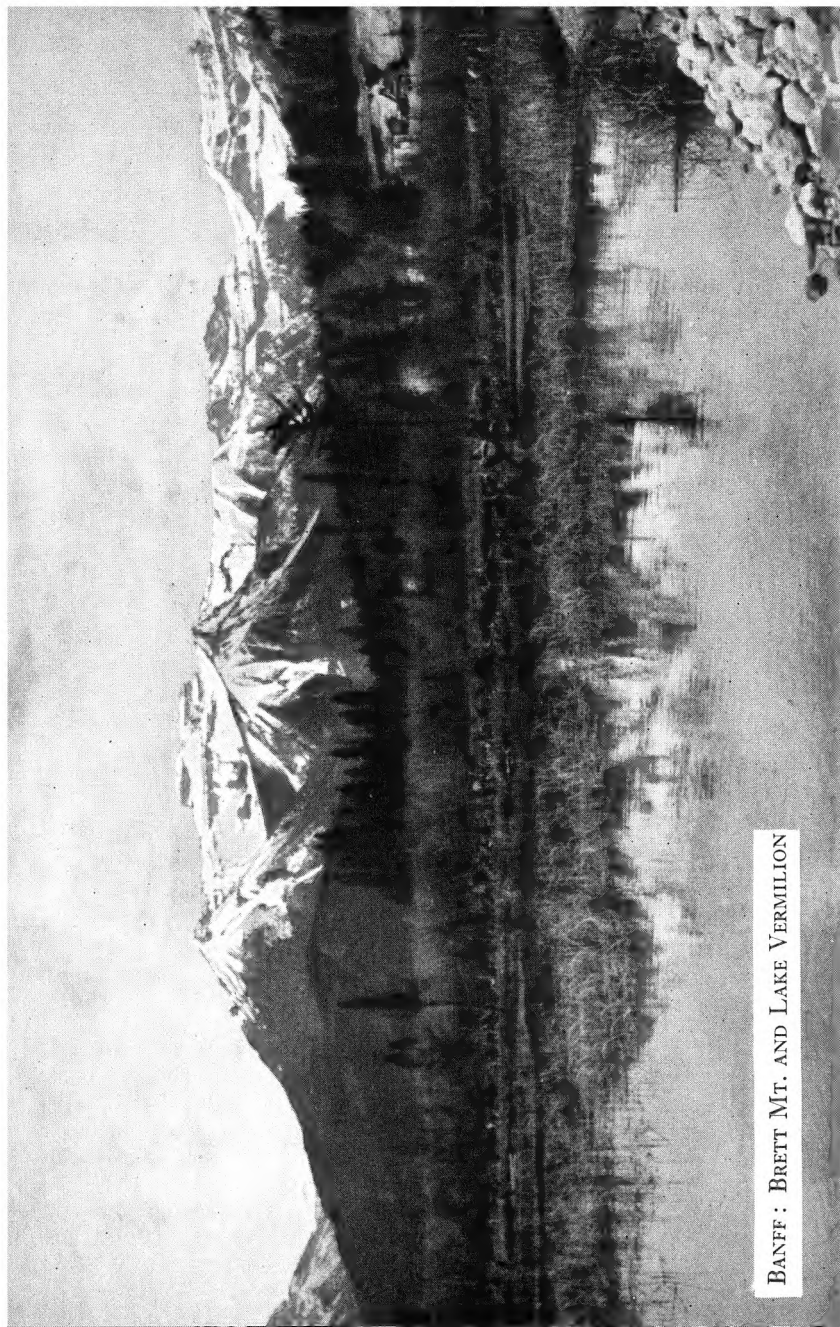
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## CANADIAN JOURNEY







BANFF : BRETT MT. AND LAKE VERMILION

[Frontispiece.



# CANADIAN JOURNEY

*By*

H. P. THOMPSON

*Editorial Secretary of the S.P.G.*

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**MADE IN GREAT BRITAIN**

## PREFACE

IN the late spring of 1938 the S.P.G. sent me over to visit Canada, as part of a plan for making better known in England the present conditions of the Church's work in Canada, and launching an appeal for funds to meet certain of its needs. In a little over eleven weeks I covered more than 15,000 miles, by rail and road and air, travelling from Montreal to Victoria, and from the borders of the States to Aklavik in the Arctic. My hosts showed me everything possible in the time available, and nothing could have exceeded their hospitality and helpfulness. The impressions made by so hurried a tour are bound to be rather of the surface of things, than of the deeper forces that lie below. I have tried in the chapters that follow to share with those who may read them some of the things I saw, in the hope that they may gain, as I did, a warm admiration for the courageous work which the Canadian Church is doing in face of great difficulties, and may wish to help the S.P.G. in its plans for supporting and stabilising that work.

Faith looks to the future. Canada plays a great part in the life of the world to-day, but how much greater in fifty years from now ! How great will be the influence of the Church in determining how she shall play her part ! For two hundred years the Mother Church in England has fostered the growth of her daughter Church in the Great Dominion ; she will be proud to continue that partnership until it reaches its fulfilment and conclusion.

H. P. T.



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# CANADIAN JOURNEY

## I

### BIRD'S-EYE VIEW

It is an exciting moment when "the other side" of the Atlantic at last comes into sight. Is that faint outline on the horizon just a sharp-edged cloud, or can it be land? Land it is; and proves to be St. Pierre, a French island lying off the south coast of Newfoundland. We pass it by, dim in the evening light, and flecked with patches of snow, and we feel that the end of our voyage is near. Yet this is Saturday afternoon, and it will take us till Tuesday mid-day, maintaining the steady thirteen knots of our cargo-boat, to reach Montreal. And even then we shall be less than half-way from Liverpool to Vancouver—so vast is the size of Canada.

Monday morning, and we are steaming up the narrowing estuary of the St. Lawrence, close to its southern shore, the Gaspé coast. Along this are dotted neat little French fishing-villages, each grouped round the spire of a church.

"Behind that," says my Canadian companion, "lie fifty miles of rock and forest, practically empty."

"Empty?" I ask, for it looks attractive and habitable enough.

"Yes; you must remember that in Canada we have the population of Greater London spread over a country the size of Europe."

Vast spaces; a population too small to fill them—these are two of the foundation facts about Canada;

the third is, that nature and history have broken up the land into great sections, which do not too easily combine in a common life.

We have passed by two of these as we steamed up the St. Lawrence to Montreal. The Maritime Provinces run west from Nova Scotia, but do not quite reach the St. Lawrence. Here the first British settlers made their homes, even before 1700: and here, when the War of American Independence began, the loyalist refugees streamed in. So they have remained essentially British. But the neighbouring Province of Quebec, along both shores of the St. Lawrence up to Quebec and Montreal, was the sphere of French colonisation. The British conquest did not change its population, though the stream of loyalist immigrants from the south flowed up to Montreal, which is still a bi-lingual city, half British and half French. The province remains essentially French, dominated by the Roman Catholic Church, and at times even talking of separation. But it has planted its stakes also out in the west, where contingents of settlers have been placed on the prairies, each group of villages centred upon a well-built church.

To these two eastern sections nature has given land of rock and forest, river and lake and sea-coast. While ships were still made of timber, ship-building provided a source of prosperity. But those days are past; to-day farms cut from the forests, with fishing and the timber trade, provide a rather meagre livelihood. Trade and industry have passed these districts by, flowing up the St. Lawrence to Montreal and the Great Lakes; though when the river freezes in winter, Halifax takes its share of the sea-borne traffic.

Montreal is the chief port and largest city of Canada.

Travelling westwards from it, we enter the area in which the main business and industrial life of Canada is concentrated. Bounded on the north by a line drawn from Montreal through Ottawa to Georgian Bay on Lake Huron, it runs south into a great spearhead between Lakes Erie and Huron. Here, in an area hardly as large as the British Isles, 60 per cent. of the population of Canada is gathered. The forests that once covered the ground have long been cleared away, leaving rich farmland, and, in the south, fertile fruit farms. Ottawa is the centre of the Dominion's political life, Toronto of its business interests; Hamilton is its Sheffield; Montreal gathers the grain in its huge elevators and loads it into ocean-going ships for customers across the Atlantic. This district of South Ontario is the heart of Canada's life.

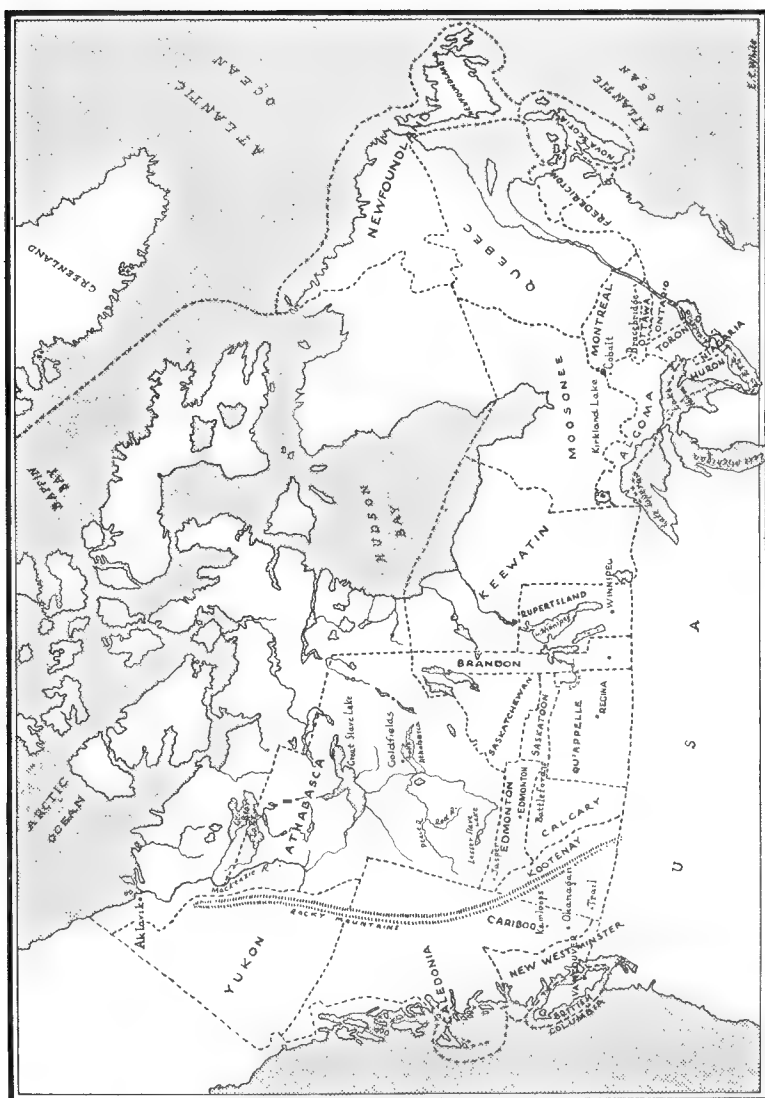
The rough country north of the St. Lawrence is the beginning of a great belt of rock and forest which nature has thrown right across Canada, almost to the Mackenzie River in the North West. Geologists call it the "pre-Cambrian shield". Its southern edge runs close behind Montreal and Ottawa, makes the north shores of Lakes Huron and Superior, then slopes up by Lake Winnipeg, over to the great lakes of the Mackenzie River, and up to the Arctic Ocean. It has a double effect upon the life of Canada. Geographically, it forms a great barrier between the east and the west. Until the railways forced their way through, it was a long and difficult journey by water from the populous lands of Ontario to Winnipeg and the prairies. Even to-day you cannot get across by road; to drive a car from Toronto to Winnipeg you must go through the United States. Further west, the "shield" sets a northern boundary to the prairies, for the soil upon its rocks is too scanty to make farming land.

But if it offers no wealth by that means, it is rich in other kinds; for its forests provide the lumber which all Canada uses for building, the paper pulp on which our daily Press exists, and the raw material for cellophane wrappings and artificial silk stockings; and in its rocks lie hidden nickel and copper, silver and gold, and the still more precious pitchblende from which radium is extracted.

The rich fields of ore are often remote, hard to find and hard to work when found; but upon them, and upon the coal and oil and ore of the Rockies, the future prosperity of Canada may well be built, rather than upon its corn lands and ranches.

The prairies cover the great stretch of level land from Winnipeg to the Rockies, bounded by the United States border on the south, and on the north by the infertile rocks of the "shield". East to west they run some 800 miles; south to north from 200 to 300 miles. All along the south they are open land, almost free from trees; but across the north a fringe of forest covers them some 50 miles deep, and the settler, like his predecessors a hundred years earlier in Ontario, has to fell the trees and lift the stumps and clear the ground before he can make his farm; though his labour will often be rewarded with a very fertile soil.

Beyond the prairies stands out the great mountain barrier that, beginning with the Rockies, fills with parallel ranges the whole space down to the Pacific coast. This is British Columbia, a country of mountains and valleys and deep-cut sea-coast, of lumber and fish-canning and gold mines, and of a climate not unlike that of the British Isles. Up into its southern end runs a strange wedge of dry, sandy country, a spear-head of Californian desert, with its point at Kamloops. But irrigate



MAP II: CANADA: DIOCESES AND CENTRES MENTIONED IN THE BOOK.



INDIAN  
BOYS  
FROM THE  
MODAWAK  
INSTITUTE,  
BRANTFORD.

the sandy soil, and there is nothing that it cannot grow ; the Okanagan district of southern British Columbia is famous for the produce of its fruit farms and market gardens.

Thus the wide spaces of Canada fall into distinct areas : the British Maritimes ; French Quebec ; populous and prosperous South Ontario ; the prairies ; and British Columbia ; while across more than half the continent runs the great belt of the " pre-Cambrian shield ", difficult to penetrate, largely uninhabited, but rich in mineral wealth.

To this bird's-eye view of the country itself we must add a brief account of how it has been opened up and occupied.

At the dawn of history we see in it only the scattered tribes of Indians, hunting, trapping and fishing among its forests and prairies, and often fighting one another—the tribes have still their distinct languages ; and, to the north, the Eskimo, often in conflict with the Indians. The first to settle from across the Atlantic were the French up the St. Lawrence River, and the British in Newfoundland and Nova Scotia ; and it was the spread of war from Europe to Canada that caused Wolfe to attack and win Quebec, and so bring all the new country under British rule in 1763.

Its history since then marks out successive stages of immigration and the occupation of fresh areas. First, the War of American Independence drove the Loyalists north, and they flowed into the Maritimes and the country round Lake Ontario and Lake Huron, gradually clearing the forests to make their homes. But the " pre-Cambrian " barrier of rock and forest held them there. Into the prairie country, beyond the Red River, another line of entry had been taken since 1670 by the Hudson's Bay Company, working up the rivers and lakes from the

Bay, and establishing its "forts" as trading posts with the Indians. By this route came in such groups as that led by Lord Selkirk in 1811 to settle on the Red River as farmers; by this route John West came out in 1820 to see what could be done for the long-neglected spiritual life of the settlers and the agents of the Company; so that when at last Bishop George Mountain made contact from the east by his laborious journey from Toronto to the Red River in 1844, he found four churches and 1700 worshippers, and work already begun among the Indians.

Rupertsland was made a diocese soon after, but the first bishop reached his see through the States, travelling up from the south. Meanwhile settlement had begun at the other end, on the Pacific Coast. The discovery of coal on Vancouver Island, and of gold on the mainland opposite, had attracted settlers from 1850 onwards, and soon British Columbia was a growing colony, but living a life of its own, divided by almost unknown mountains and prairie from the rest of the continent. Thus there were three separate and distinct blocks of population; the greatest, by far, up the St. Lawrence and on the lakes in the east; the second, in the centre, on the Red River; the third down on the Pacific Coast.

Then came the decisive events that made Canada one. In 1867 the colonies of the east united in a Confederation, and bought up the territories in the west hitherto controlled by the Hudson's Bay Company. Why should not British Columbia join in too, and unite the whole country from ocean to ocean? British Columbia made one condition, and a very wise one. There must be a railway running right through from coast to coast; else there would be no real unity. So in 1870 all Canada united in one Dominion; and in 1886 the Canadian



Pacific Railway was completed from sea to sea ; and soon other lines also cut through the dividing barriers of rock and forest in the east, and of mountains in the west.

So the prairies were opened. As soon as the railway had penetrated to Winnipeg, and even before " head of steel " crept steadily westward over the prairies, pioneers were going out to take up land and make their farms. But the great rush came in the early years of this century, when the railways and the dealers in real estate, making golden promises that often had little substance in them, attracted settlers in thousands to take up " quarter sections " of virgin land on easy terms, in hope of turning them, by a few years' hard work, into prosperous corn land. Thousands each day, British and Eastern Canadian, Central European, Russian and Scandinavian, streamed through Winnipeg to the west, and quickly the empty spaces were filled up.

Then came the Great War ; the stream of immigration stopped and began to flow back, as the men of the prairies, especially the British among them, joined the Colours. After the War came a brief prosperity, and then world depression, which hit industrial and rural Canada as hard as any other land. As if this were not enough, upon large areas of Alberta and Saskatchewan came eight years of disaster, when drought and frost and grasshopper robbed them of all crops. Their poverty reacted upon the whole country : Canada passed through the deeps. 1938 has brought promise of recovery. Rainfall has returned to the prairies, and hopes are rising. But the burden of debt, and the set-back of world recovery by wars and rumours of wars, must delay full prosperity. Yet it is a country once more hopeful through which we are to take our journey.

## II

### THE SUPPORTING BASE

THE visitor to Canada, landing at Quebec or Montreal, gains his first impressions in a big city. Great cities, all over the world, are much alike to-day. The wide streets are lined with luxury shops and blaze with neon signs; streams of cars halt and move under the orders of robot traffic lights; lofty modern office buildings tower above old churches and once-peaceful squares. In Montreal or Toronto the newcomer from England finds his surroundings familiar. He may well envy the width of the streets and the freedom of cars to stand parked all day along their sides. And in the residential quarters he must admire the friendly plots of grass that stand open before each private dwelling; the Englishman rails in his front garden, and tries to make his home his castle; the Canadian leaves his frontage open, as though to welcome all comers to his door.

Another fact forced itself upon me during a motor drive round Montreal and its outskirts. Time and again we passed churches, schools, religious institutions of all kinds, and I asked what they were. Always, it seemed, the biggest and richest looking were Roman Catholic: the next were probably of the United Church; or they might be Anglican, or Presbyterian, or Baptist: outwardly there was nothing to distinguish these one from another. I learnt that our Church does not enjoy in

Canada the position that it holds in the home land. First in numbers and power stands the Roman Church, firmly based upon the French province of Quebec. Second is the United Church, a recent combination of the Methodists, Congregationalists and less rigid Presbyterians. The Church of England in Canada (a cumbrous and not altogether happy title) comes third in numbers. In the architecture and furnishing of their churches, and even in the forms of worship held within them, there is far less difference between the "Free Churches" and the Anglican than in England. The United Church is not above borrowing from its Anglican neighbours copies of "Merbecke" and other choral settings of the Communion office.

Yet some of its prestige still clings to the old Church of our fathers. Its influence in public life is out of proportion to its numbers. Most of those who own no particular allegiance are regarded as "C. of E.", as, for instance, among hospital patients. The Church organises its work on a parochial system, and feels a responsibility towards all within the parish, though lack of staff makes extensive visiting difficult. There are, of course, no endowments (with a few small exceptions), and the congregations carry a much heavier burden of expense than their fellows in richly endowed England; the upkeep of their church, the stipends of their clergy and workers, "apportionments" for the diocesan and central Church funds, mount up to a high figure; but they learn to give liberally, for the most part through weekly offerings in double envelopes.

Secure and established as all this Church life looks in the cities and country parishes of populous South Ontario, it has still its own "missionary" work and problems at

its own doors. Probably a greater proportion of people are active members of some Christian body in Canada than in England : yet it was estimated, a few years ago, that little more than half of those reckoned as Anglicans were actually worshipping members of the Church : there is, as in England, an immense work of witness and conversion to be done among the indifferent and the unbelieving. And there is a double-edged problem due to a steady drift from country to city. Country parishes, many of which cover large areas with two or three churches to serve, see their congregations dwindling, and the young people in particular drawn away from the monotonous labour of farming to the pleasures and opportunities of city life. In some districts groups of foreign origin such as Mennonites or Lutherans gather their fellows round them, gradually squeezing the Church people out. So the country parish may become unable to support itself, and may have to ask for a grant from the diocese, and revert to the status of "missionary district". And by the same process the city grows, pushing out new suburbs which demand new church buildings and new parishes, yet cannot produce the money to provide them.

At Westdale, outside Hamilton, I saw the method by which the Canadian Church often meets this demand, the "basement church". Half below ground level a hall is built, its walls strong enough to bear the church which will some day be added above. But for the present the hall serves as church on Sundays, as parish hall on week-days ; its temporary sanctuary shut off by a folding screen or curtains. As the congregation grows in numbers it works to raise a building fund ; and in due course the church is built, and the new parish is furnished with the double building, entered by one porch and

warmed—an important matter in the Canadian winter—by one furnace.

In Toronto are centred the organisations that serve the common work of the whole Church of the Dominion. These include the General Board of Religious Education, which provides material and directs work for Church teaching among children and adults, and the Council for Social Service, which inspires and guides much social work. But most vital of all is the "Missionary Society of the Church of England in Canada", M.S.C.C. for short, through which support is provided for the Church's evangelistic work both within Canada and beyond.

Within Canada there are many dioceses which cannot yet provide all the cost of the work which they do; and there is direct missionary work among the Jews and the Oriental immigrants, the Indians and the Eskimo. But if the charity of the Canadian Church begins at home, it is not content to stay there; it looks out beyond and takes its full share in missionary work in the wider world. The dioceses of Honan in China, and of Mid-Japan, are its special responsibility, and it supports the Kangra district in India, and a hospital in Palestine.

Every diocese in Canada, even the poorest, contributes to these funds. An "apportionment" is allotted to each, and divided up among its parishes. On our English scale the amounts asked would seem formidably large; but Canadians are generous givers, and do their utmost to contribute their share: some of the poorest dioceses are the most regular in meeting their obligations. The M.S.C.C. votes the funds thus raised to the dioceses that need them, and to the missionary work of the Church.

The dioceses of South Ontario are the main "supporting base" of the Canadian Church. About half the

Church population of Canada is found in them. They have their own missionary tasks still, but their contributions to the M.S.C.C. are also the mainstay of the poorer dioceses in the Dominion. They give on a scale far higher than any parishes in England.

As one looks at the life of the cities of Ontario to-day, it is hard to realise how young they still are. It is only 130 years since the first church was built in Toronto, or York, as it was then named. That first Church of St. James was a plain wooden structure, 40 × 50 feet, surrounded with tree stumps, in a clearing cut from the forest. To-day that forest ground has become the heart of Toronto's business quarter, covered with great stores and offices and warehouses; and close by the old site rises the dignified Gothic Cathedral of St. James, the fourth building to bear that name.

A typical story of those pioneer days comes from St. Catherine's, to-day a big "garden-city" of 36,000 people, in the country near Niagara-on-the-Lake. Old Niagara, originally a frontier fort, received many of the first Loyalist refugees from the rebellious states, and became the first capital of the new colony. To it, in 1792, came the Rev. Robert Addison, a missionary priest sent by the S.P.G., to labour there till his death 37 years later. Like the prairie priest to-day, Robert Addison rode out over the country around, largely covered with forests, to hold services wherever he could gather a few settlers together, and so to lay the foundations for new centres.

St. Catherine's was one of these. Two Loyalist refugees, Jacob Dittrick and John Hainer, set out one day from Niagara to make new homes for themselves in the forest land near by. They happened upon Twelve Mile Creek, where a little stream flowed between high

banks, making a break in the forests, and the deer came shyly down to the salt-lick in the valley. Here they staked out their land, on opposite sides of the stream. Others came to join them, clearing the forests to make their fields. They began to hold Divine Service each Sunday in their log houses, and Robert Addison visited them when he could. In 1796 they felt that the time had come to build a church, and opened a subscription list. The faded paper still remains: the first of the forty-four names upon it are those of Jacob Dittrick and John Hainer: the sums promised amount to £122 12s.

So they built the first church of the new settlement, now named St. Catherine's, and dedicated it to St. George. It was a simple wooden building, 34 × 30 ft., to hold seventy people, in double pews down the centre and single pews down the sides: above the entrance was a narrow gallery. A two-decker pulpit faced the pews, standing (apparently) in front of the altar and its rails.

They had built their church, but it was thirty-five years before they had a resident priest to minister in it: probably they could not afford to offer a stipend. Mr. Addison and others came over occasionally; but usually the leading laymen read prayers and gave discourses. War passed across the country, and for two years the church was used as a hospital, and suffered damage in the process. At last in 1819 they petitioned Bishop Mountain of Quebec for a resident clergyman—Jacob Dittrick's name once more stood first among the petitioners. For a time the Bishop could only arrange for regular visits by neighbours; but in 1828 an S.P.G. missionary, the Rev. Edward Parkin, came. Soon after his arrival one of his children died, and he stayed only a year. But in 1830 the Rev. Charles Clarke, another

missionary of the S.P.G., began a ministry of ten years.

With a resident minister the church grew, and a new building was soon needed. To raise funds they sold the old wooden church to the Wesleyans, reserving only, until the new church should be completed, the right to use it on Sundays from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. (which suggests the length of the sermons!) and the ownership (for some reason) of the gallery and the stove. Hardly had the agreement been completed, when the church was burnt down: a Wesleyan meeting late at night was blamed for the disaster. The poor Wesleyans fulfilled their promise, and paid for the heap of ashes that was all that remained—except the stove, and that still belonged to the churchpeople.

It took another four years to complete the new church of St. George, and it must have been with great joy that Mr. Clarke saw his dream realised. But he only ministered in it twice. On Sunday, July 12th, 1840, he started out with his warden to drive to Port Dalhousie for an afternoon service. As they descended the hill to the stream, the horse ran away, both men were thrown out, and Mr. Clarke died of his injuries.

To-day the third church of St George stands in the centre of the great industrial yet garden city of St. Catherine's, and on a green lawn above the valley a stone marks the site of the first wooden church. "Thanks to the S.P.G.," said its rector, "the Church took the lead here, and has never lost it."

To-day, out on the new frontiers of settlement in the far west and north, the same story is being enacted. Newcomers take up their "quarter sections", fell the trees to build their first homes, clear the forests to make



their farms. The nearest missionary—often still supported by the S.P.G.—pays them a visit when he can : after a time they open their subscription list and get their lumber and build their little wooden church, in shape and size very like the first St. George's in the township of St. Catherine's. The settlement grows, the day comes when a resident priest can be supported and supplied : soon a bigger church is needed. So history repeats itself to-day : and if we do our part as our forefathers did theirs, a hundred years hence it may again be said, " Thanks to the S.P.G. the Church took the lead here, and has never lost it."

Another side of the Church's earliest work in Canada is illustrated at Brantford, in the diocese of Huron. Among those who stood loyal to the British Crown through the revolt of the American colonies were the " Six Nations " of the Iroquois Indians, the Mohawks chief among them. These people had come early into contact with the British settlers, and had been converted, largely through the work of S.P.G. missionaries. In 1712 Queen Anne built them a chapel at Fort Hunter in the state of New York, and presented to them a set of solid silver Communion plate and a big Bible.

When the War of Independence broke out in 1776, Joseph Brant, their chief, led them into the fight on the King's side. The struggle went against them ; they lost their lands and homes, and their chapel was burnt. They buried the Bible and Communion plate, and fled northwards with the Loyalists.

After the war they were granted land in Canada, part at Quinte Bay on Lake Ontario, and part on the Great River, where at " Brant's ford " they made their new homes, and in 1785 the King built them a chapel. There

" His Majesty's Chapel of the Mohawks " still stands, the original building of wood, little altered, with the grave of Joseph Brant close beside it. And in the Mohawk Institute near by are treasured Queen Anne's Bible and half of the Communion Plate, the other half being in safe keeping still at Quinte Bay.

The Mohawk Institute and the Brantford Reserve show what can be done over a term of years by the type of work which is still in its early stages in the remoter parts of Canada. It has been carried on here for over a hundred years by the oldest of all existing missionary bodies in our Church, " The Company for the Propagation of the Gospel in New Zealand and Parts Adjacent " commonly called the " New England Company ", which was founded in 1649. Like the S.P.G., this Company transferred its activities to Canada after the War of Independence, and in 1827 sent a missionary to the Indians at Brantford, the Rev. Robert Lugger. Seeing that education of the children was the key to progress, Mr. Lugger started day schools, and then opened the " Mohawk Institute " as a residential school, giving literary, industrial and religious education to the Indian children. The present fine building, the third of its kind, takes some 150 boys and girls, sent from different Reserves, and gives them an excellent and very practical education, in which farming, building, tailoring, etc., take a large part. And out on the big Reserve near by the Indians have settled down to farming life, in nicely built homes, the Government providing a first-rate hospital for their care, and encouraging the religious work done by the Church, which has six churches and two clergy on the Reserve.

Driving through the Reserve, one sees nothing to

distinguish it from other farming lands in the neighbourhood, except the darker skins of its people, and perhaps a rather casual cultivation: neither ambition nor the press of circumstance has driven the Indians to the intensive industry that is shown by their neighbours. But they live a quiet and contented life, managing many of their own affairs in their own council; and thanks to the medical care spent upon them, the scourge of tuberculosis, so prevalent in the past, has been controlled and checked, and their numbers are increasing.

So, passing west from Ontario to prairie lands where settlement is still young, to the frontiers where pioneers are still clearing the forests, or to Indian Reserves where work has been recently begun and the older generation is still pagan, one carries memories which become prophecies, and watches the growing seed with knowledge of what the mature crop can be.

### III

#### THE PRAIRIES

THE train takes two nights and a day to cross the belt of rock and forest from Toronto to Winnipeg, the starting-point for the prairies. Modern city as it is, Winnipeg is full of memories for those who know its story. Those wide streets crammed with trams and cars are the old trails by which, a hundred years ago, Indian dog-teams drew their sledge-loads of furs to the Hudson's Bay Company's trading port at Fort Garry; by Portage Avenue they came from the western prairies, by Main Street from the lakes of the north. Only a fragment of the old fort stands now in a little garden, overshadowed by a huge modern hotel. But away north, on the bank of the Red River, Lower Fort Garry remains, to suggest the life of the old days by its square of defensive walls and bastions, its store and barrack buildings, with timbered rooms half underground, and the last of the stout old "York boats" in which the precious furs were carried down their long journey to Hudson Bay for dispatch to England. Spaced along the banks of the Red River are the stone churches which served the settlers of the 1850's; and St. James' Church, on the bank of the Assiniboine, is the old wooden building set up when Rupertsland was made a diocese in 1849, and to which the S.P.G. sent its first rector in the following year.

Another delightful relic marks a further stage in the history of expansion ; in a park, surrounded by flower beds, stands the first engine of the C.P.R., the " Countess of Dufferin " ; she was brought down the river by barge in 1877 to work the first railway at Winnipeg ; and she drew the first trains that later began to push out westwards on to the prairies.

The lure of the virgin soil of the prairies drew settlers in increasing numbers. In 1881 the railway began to creep westwards from Winnipeg, but always the farmers were moving out beyond " head of steel ", and a missionary making a thousand-mile tour on horseback through Saskatchewan in 1883 found in many a centre which has since become well known little groups to whom he could give in passing the ministrations of the Church. As railhead advanced the cities of the future were born ; Regina, Moose Jaw, Calgary, Edmonton. The Church was found early in each of them, helping the settlers to build little wooden churches, holding regular worship in them, and visiting the districts around.

But the flood of immigration rose to its height, as we have seen, in the early years of the present century. Thousands of settlers of all nationalities poured in, and many of them were British. The Church did its utmost to follow them. But it was a task quite beyond the power of the Canadian Church, and indeed the responsibility belonged in fairness to the Old Country, from which so many of the settlers came. Great efforts were made in England to meet the emergency by special means. In 1907 Archdeacon Lloyd gathered a body of fifty laymen and sent them out over the prairies. In 1910 the Archbishops launched their Western Canada Fund, which aimed at placing fifty clergy each year out in the west,

and started three centres of work by groups stationed at Regina, Cardston and Edmonton.

Before this work could have its full effect the Great War broke in and stopped it. After the War, as we have seen, brief prosperity ended in world-wide depression; and on Canada fell two crushing disasters of her own. For eight years, from 1930 to 1937, large districts of the west lost all their harvests; the farmers were ruined, and many left to start again in other areas; the business communities of the east were hard hit by the loss of trade. And in 1932, through the defalcations of a trusted official, the Church in the Province of Rupertsland lost its invested funds to the figure of £150,000.

Both disasters proved the fine spirit of the Church. The clergy shared hard times with their people, and stood by them on the prairies. The whole Church united to make good the lost capital, and by a splendid effort restored it in three years. But an impoverished Church must feel the strain of such an effort, made during the worst of hard times, for some years to come.

Such is the background against which one must see the work of the Church on the prairies to-day. It is a struggle to hold on through overwhelming difficulties. After the War a parochial framework had been established, covering the prairie dioceses, though all too scantily. Each priest had a number of centres to work, and by incessant travelling served them with fair regularity. During the recent hard years scarcely a church has been closed; though the clergy have often doubled their districts. Out of their extreme poverty the people have given what they could—eggs, perhaps, or wood for firing, since they had no money. In the new areas to which many have moved to start again, the Church has tried to

follow and care for them, but they have little to give except their labour.

The worst of the drought fell upon the southern districts of Saskatchewan and Alberta, and of all the dioceses none was harder hit than Qu'Appelle. Over one area of this I travelled for three days. Change of fortune had come at last. Heavy snow had fallen in winter and had melted slowly, soaking the soil. The early pools were brimming with water and full of wild duck. The young shoots of corn were rising green from the dark earth. But the signs of the past distress were everywhere visible. Many farms were empty and weedgrown; against the fences and railway banks were heaps of dry "Russian thistle", the one plant that flourishes in drought, and covers the derelict fields with its intricate globes, till they dry and break off and bowl along in the wind and pile up in a rampart against the first obstruction. The surface soil, too, turned by the drought to a dust finer than sand, lifts in the wind and blows like a thin cloud over the fields, silting up fences and buildings and covering roads; and sometimes a great storm whirls the whole surface of the ground into the air, turning day to night, and blinding and choking any whom it catches in the open.

Those who planned the country for settlement drew straight lines across it at intervals of a mile, north and south, east and west, thus marking it off into mile-square "sections". On every perpendicular line of that chess-board, and on every second horizontal line, they allowed space for a good wide road, made (where it is made) by digging a trench on each side and throwing the soil up in the middle. The "sections" they divided into four quarters, each half a mile square; they gave a quarter

section to each settler, and told them to group their houses together, where the roads intersected.

To-day the relics of that plan remain. One or two main roads, perhaps 50 miles apart, are surfaced with gravel for through traffic; others, though of quite plain earth, are passable so long as they are dry; most are mere cart tracks, wriggling between their wide borders; some hardly exist at all. So to reach your destination you move like the castle on the chess-board, always at right angles. Far away on the starboard bow you descry two or three narrow, wedge-shaped towers rising on the horizon; they are grain elevators, the sure sign of a railway station and a little township: once they stored the wealth of the Golden West, now they are empty, except for the seed grain which the Government must furnish to the farmers. You plan your course towards them, choosing the least bad "roads". Six miles north, three east, four more north, two east—so you reach your goal at last, crab-wise from the side.

How empty the land is! On such a drive of fifteen miles you would pass perhaps a dozen farms, and see another dozen in the offing; and of those twenty-four some will be derelict and empty, some a huddle of wooden shacks, some a comfortable wood-built house with a big barn and a group of sheds. And every single farmer, even in the big, well-planned homesteads, will be "on relief"; for even the best of them, men who have put their money and their labour into their land for thirty years past, have lost all they had in these eight years of drought, and now look to the Government for seed, for fodder for their horses or "gas" for their tractors, and even for personal needs, and it will take many a good harvest to lift the load of debt from their shoulders.





BASEMENT CHURCH : WESTDALE, HAMILTON.



C.P.R. No. 1 : WINNIPEG.

[Facing p. 22.]



A TOWN ON THE PRAIRIES : EMPRESS.



AN EASTER VISIT : A FARM NEAR EMPRESS.

[Facing p. 23.]

We come to the little township grouped round the grain elevators on the railway. From the station runs a "main street", setting the lay-out of the town: on either side a "duck-board" path affords safety when rains turn the road into a quagmire. Dotted along it are a few general stores, a Chinaman's café, a garage—and probably a barrack-like wooden hotel, unpainted and empty, a number of empty stores, and a closed Bank. Beyond, on the outlines of half-planned streets, little wooden houses, with wire-fenced gardens, are scattered; of the one or two hundred inhabitants 97 per cent. are "on relief"; the other 3 per cent. are officials or railway workers.

Here the prairie parson has his home and centre. His vicarage is a wooden bungalow, set in a square of sandy garden, and by its side stands a neat little wooden church, seated to hold from thirty to fifty people; beyond it may be a parish hall of similar size. Out along the railway, perhaps thirty miles in each direction, are several other depressed little townships, with either a tiny church or a community hall, in which he gathers his people for worship. And out on the prairies, thirty or fifty miles away, are other centres where a few families can come together, perhaps in a school, rarely in a church which they have built.

So the prairie priest lives in his car. He plans his Sundays so that he may visit as many centres as possible, giving Holy Communion at the first two, or even three: he tries to provide for each a Celebration at least once a month. Gaps can be filled on the weekdays, but farm work begins early and ends late, and he must allow for that. He must closely watch the cost of his travelling, too, for gas is expensive, and the roads are rough and the

car is old and often needs repairs ; travelling soon takes a very big bite out of a stipend that may be only £12 a month and is seldom more than £20. There are week-night fixtures too, Scouts in several centres, the A.Y.P.A. (Anglican Young People's Association), Confirmation or Bible Classes, and the invaluable W.A. (Women's Auxiliary) in which his wife, if he be married, will take the lead. The prairie parson's wife shares her husband's hardships ; she has the household chores to do, her man is away for many hours day after day, and there are few with whom she can find real companionship.

Three little scenes which I shared may illustrate the work. On a Rogation day the priest drove out twenty miles to give their Easter Communion to a mother and daughter who had waited all that time to receive it. In the spotless inner room of their little house he set up a folding altar, the quiet service moved to its central mystery, and they knelt to receive their Risen Lord, with His blessing for them and their home.

We went on to visit a very different home, a shack built of sods and corrugated iron, in which dwelt a man and woman—foreigners—with nine young children, trying to make a living out of a derelict farm. The mother fell ill with grave internal pain, and neighbours carried her down nearly thirty miles of rough roads to the only hospital and left her there. The doctor relieved her pain ; probably she should have had an operation, but she decided to go back to the nine children. The priest came to the rescue, and carried her home in his car. He found that the children were enrolled in the Sunday School by post, but could not do their answers, for there was no Bible in the house. So now, being within reach, he called to leave a Bible. The mother hesitated :

"Is there anything to pay?" But her face cleared when she knew that it was a gift. Probably she had not a cent of money in the house.

The third scene is Ascension Day morning. Out on the prairie stands a little white church, with a school alongside, but no other house anywhere in sight, except one distant farm. Yet round it, at 9.30 a.m., a little group of cars has drawn up, and four or five families have come, from four and nine and fourteen miles, bringing with them those of their children who are too young to be at school. There they sang their Ascension Day Eucharist, and twelve made their Communion. There were no alms, for some might have had no coins to give, and might have stayed away. Afterwards they asked of England; it was home to all of them, but none had been able to visit "Home" since they came out.

"Not a coin in the house". That has often been literally true of families on the prairies during these disastrous years. Yet out of their poverty they give most generously to their church. One parish in the heart of the drought area raises about £80 a year for its priest's stipend, its "apportionment" of £33 for diocesan and central funds—including its share in the missionary work of the Church—and about £45 more by various efforts for church expenses. And all this comes from a few small congregations, whose members are nearly all on relief.

The Bishop of Qu'Appelle asked each family in his diocese to make a special offering during Lent of one cent ( $\frac{1}{2}d.$ ) a meal, putting it into a special box. In this parish twenty-five families took these boxes, and their contents were from 9 to 49 cents.

Such is the giving which the S.P.G. grant to Qu'Appelle

diocese supplements : it helps to raise each prairie priest's stipend to £12 per month, barely enough to live upon when the cost of his car and its running expenses have been met. It is literal truth that sometimes he must choose between buying bread for his children or petrol to go about his work.

The level prairie runs west into the diocese of Calgary and north into those of Edmonton and Saskatoon and Saskatchewan, and all these shared in the sufferings of drought : but in the foothills of the Rockies and northward beyond Edmonton is land of more generous rainfall, partly covered with forest. Here ranching and mixed farming replace the unbroken fields of corn. Yet here too some of the years of drought wrought their havoc ; and when drought strikes a great cattle ranch the tragedy is even more pitiful ; for if it is hard to see green crops wither and die in the ground, it is heartbreaking to see herds of cattle and horses starve and suffer and at last lie down to die. But so it was with ranchers who had bred up choice herds numbering thousands : some the Government were able to shift to other parts of the country ; but they could not move all, and at the last the great meat companies bought up the best of what remained for a few shillings a head and the rest were left to die. Recovery is slower too ; a derelict field needs but to be ploughed and cultivated again ; to breed up a herd of cattle takes many years.

The diocese of Kootenay does not properly belong to the prairies, for it lies among the lower ranges south of the Rockies and Selkirks, and across the border that marks off British Columbia. Yet one part of its life is best included in this chapter. The sunny valleys, rich in lakes and streams, that run south amid the foothills

towards the frontier of the States, are a wonderful country for fruit and vegetables. The soil looks all sand and shingle, but irrigate the desert and it blossoms like the rose. So here, in the Okanagan country, fruit farms of all kinds abound, and vegetable gardens flourish. In past days they were profitable, and many English folk came to live in the country and put capital into them. But here, too, hard times have come. The competition of California, which can ripen its produce a little earlier, hits the Okanagan hard. The prairies, once the best customers, have been unable to buy during these years of distress.

With the Bishop of Kootenay I spent a night at Oliver, where the Government has settled ex-soldiers on the land, and brought a canal down the valley to irrigate it. Oliver proclaims itself "the home of the cantelupe", and for miles the road runs amid well-kept orchards and gardens. In the morning we picked up a fruit-farmer, with an injured ankle, who wanted a lift to the hospital at Penticton, thirty miles on.

"I have been in the business here for some years," he told us, "and it used to be pretty good. Now there's little profit to be made out of it. But I believe it has a future, when the prairies are prosperous again."

Another sidelight on conditions is provided by the hitch-hiker. He is quite an accepted feature on the roads. You see him trudging along, carrying a pack on his back, or a brown paper parcel under his arm—all his worldly goods. As you motor by he signals a request for a lift. We picked up such a lad in the hills, fifty miles short of Oliver. He had a poisoned foot and wanted to reach the nearest hospital, at Penticton, eighty miles away.

"Where are you going?" asked the Bishop.

“ I want to get work on the fruit farms ; if I can't I shall make for Vancouver.”

He slept in the back of the car and, when we reached Oliver and the Bishop gave him a coin or two for a night's lodging, went off without a word of thanks.

Next day we picked up a much brighter and more grateful wayfarer. He had been looking in vain for work on the fruit farms, and was heading for the railway to steal a ride on a freight-car and make his way north to the Peace River.



## IV

### THE FRONTIERS

WE saw them on a patch of grass by the roadside, and stopped to question them. There were three wagons, harnessed up and ready to start, and a couple of spare horses with lads mounted on them. Two of the wagons had been built up into makeshift caravans, roofed over and fitted with a stove apiece. On the third was piled a heap of furniture—beds, chairs, a chest of drawers, odds and ends in boxes.

"Where are you making for?" asked the Bishop of Athabasca.

"Dawson Creek," answered a man of about sixty, the leader of the party. Now Dawson Creek is at the far end of the Peace River district, a month's travel, at their pace, from where we had met them.

"Where did you come from?"

"From Saskatchewan: we've been two months on the road already."

So they told their story. They were two families, with six young children and a baby among them. Two other families had started out with them, but had gone ahead, and would be waiting their arrival at Dawson Creek. They had spent thirteen years on farms in Saskatchewan, but bad times had driven them out. Living and sleeping in their wagons, and carrying with them all the furniture they had, they were hoping to make a new start in the

promised land of the Peace River. We wished them good luck, and the Bishop noted their names, so that the priest at Dawson Creek might be ready to help them at their journey's end.

During the years of drought such "transients" have been common on the roads to the north and west. For to the north the prairies gradually merge into forests, and where there are forests there is rain. There is indeed one great stretch, the Peace River country, which may be called the "last prairie"; from that lovely river valley it rises in level "benches", a country of open grass and bush and patches of forest. But elsewhere land must be won from the forest, by cutting the trees, pulling out the stumps, and roughly ploughing the ground: then it may reward three years of heavy labour with a fertile soil that produces rich crops. But the labour is immense, and it is seldom that the man who starts to clear the ground stays to reap the fruits of his toil; generally the second or third holder at last wins a paying crop.

So the farmers, whom the drought on the prairies has defeated and driven out, trek away to these frontiers in Athabasca and Saskatchewan and Brandon, carrying with them what little they have saved from their desolated homes, to make a new start, but under great handicaps, and without the carefully saved capital and the bright hopes with which they made their first venture on the prairies.

The easily worked land has already been occupied; these late-comers must take what is left. One sees them in new clearings, where the road runs through the forest; or one hears of them out in the backblocks, to be reached only by rough tracks, right off the roads. The chessboard of roads has never been completed here, on the frontiers:

there are a few major roads that cut through the forests, from one centre to another; in the open country the chessboard has been planned, but only in part laid out. Railways, too, are few and trains scarce. The Church has to work over long distances, serving small numbers. But it is proving itself, as in the earliest days, to be a true "frontier Church", eager to follow its people wherever they go, and to help them to build up a settled Church life as their numbers increase.

The stretch of country where we met these "transients" was a typical Athabasca parish. A strip of country, a hundred miles long, threaded upon the only railway and the only main road, is worked by a priest stationed in a village near its centre. He has three or four little churches, and groups who meet in halls in a few other centres. In one farmhouse, for instance, a woman gathers forty children from the backwoods each Sunday, and teaches them; some of them walk five miles to get there: only two or three have ever been inside a church. At Faust, on the Lesser Slave Lake, where we held a Sunday afternoon service, the Bishop has placed a "Woman Messenger" at work, as the priest's visits can only be rare. We found a nice new wooden church, built by donations from England, and decorated by members of the congregation; two boys who were present had lately come in from the backblocks and saw the inside of a church that day for the first time.

It is in such country as this that the "Sunday School Caravans" do most useful work. Travelling from point to point they visit every farm which they can reach. At the schools, if the teacher consents, they give religious teaching to the children—it is not part of the curriculum. They enrol names for the Sunday School by Post. If

possible, they gather children or young people for a week or so at a summer camp, where there is time really to make friends and to provide consecutive teaching and regular worship.

The Sunday School by Post is perhaps the best of all the methods devised to meet the difficulties of the prairies and the frontiers. I had a glimpse of it at Fairview, on the Peace River, where a group of three ladies, trained at St. Christopher's, Blackheath, make St. Nicholas' House the diocesan centre for children's work. The weekly issue of lesson material was just ready to go out—eight big sacks waiting to be dispatched by post. They go to hundreds of remote homes, where children, often helped by no less interested parents, read through the lessons and write their answers to the questions set. These they post back—if they can find three cents for the postage—and with them come quaint and often pathetic letters, telling of family joys and troubles and sometimes revealing desperate need. And in the shed behind St. Nicholas' House, where a Sunday School caravan is housed for the winter, lay a heap of canvas bales, stuffed with welcome supplies of warm clothes sent by those tireless helpers, the Women's Auxiliary. As winter comes they will be distributed wherever urgent needs are known.

Saskatchewan, like Athabasca, is a frontier diocese. Prince Albert, its See city, was an outpost of the Church long ago; Bishop Maclean, made first Bishop of Saskatchewan in 1874, is buried there near the little church which he built. But across the North Saskatchewan river lies a belt of frontier forest land, some fifty miles wide, which is only now being taken under cultivation. We drove along through it, passing farm after farm half made. Here was a man chaining a team of horses to a big burnt tree stump. Its roots had been cleared of

soil, and he cut them through with an axe. The team strained at its chain, but the stump stayed fast. And there were hundreds more to be cleared before his land could be ploughed. Next a big patch of land from which plumes of smoke drifted; trees and brush had been cut and piled and set on fire; the fire had eaten down into the peat-like top spit of soil, and would steadily burn it to dust, unless rain came to quench it. Burning the soil exhausts its goodness for a year or two and is forbidden; but it is a quick way of clearing the roots and obstructions.

On another patch of ground a farmer was ploughing, with a fine team of five horses. We stopped to talk: he came from Hammersmith, but it was many years since he had seen the Old Country. Yes, he liked the open life in Canada, and would not go back to the cramped suburbs of England. And yet, just for once, to see the old home again——!

One more field had as fine a crop of wheat as the heart could wish to see; the soil is good, the rainfall pretty sure, when your farm at long last is made. And hereabouts is a special soil of whitish clay on which—alone in Canada—the rich fodder crop called alfalfa will not only grow but give seed; and if they manage their business wisely the farmers here will make a good profit out of that!

So here things are on the move: little villages hope to become big ones; virgin ground is being cleared and cultivated. The Church has but one or two priests to cover this hundred-mile belt of new activity, and there are other big areas with needs and problems just as great. Here at White Fox is a church lately brought five miles from the place where it was first set up, and where the expected growth has not occurred; but White Fox is the alfalfa centre and it has electric lighting in its one or two

streets. The move has opened a great chink between the nave and the chancel of the wooden structure ; and the parsonage set next door is the roughest of little shacks ; but here a deacon is settling down to work and hopes for the future are high.

Next day, in another bit of frontier country further south, we plunge out along a rough road beyond the last village into a patch of almost unbroken forest. Here and there trees have been felled and clearings made, but nowhere yet is a ploughed field or a crop to be seen. Away through the trees we catch a glimpse of a log-built hut and go to inquire. It is the remains of a half-made farm, which the first holder began and then left. The acre or two which he had cleared are covered with bush again. But an old soldier and his wife and son, townsfolk who could get no work in the city where they had been for twenty years, have come out here to try to make a living. They are still waiting to secure the land for their own. Then they will have to clear the bush and plough the land, and cut down more of the forest to extend the farm. Meanwhile they have a little garden planted and full of promise. " No, it's not so bad out here," says the veteran, " and this log house is as snug as can be in winter, if you keep the chinks between the logs properly filled."

The nearest church to that hut is about thirty miles away, along shocking roads ; the nearest priest is perhaps sixty miles away—it is he who has discovered it to-day. And he says to me :

" The first thing the Church must give us is cars ; for everywhere there are these newcomers out in remote places, and we must go to them and show them that we want to help them."

Perhaps in no part of the Canadian Church are priests given such distances to cover, in serving small groups of

people, as in the diocese of Cariboo, which can thus be ranked as a "frontier" diocese. It includes the great river valleys of British Columbia, set amidst deep forests and mountain ridges; where only a solitary railway, sometimes without even a road running alongside, provides a thread of communication between a few small groups of houses and occasional lonely homesteads.

An extreme instance is the North Thompson River valley, up which the C.N.R. train runs from Kamloops to reach the Yellowhead Pass and cross the Rockies. Leaving Kamloops and its outskirts behind, the line climbs beside the rushing river into ever greener and more forested country, in which farms grow fewer and buildings rarer as the valley narrows and deepens. Over a stretch of 180 miles, as far as from London to Exeter, it passes only one little township, Blue River, of a few hundred people, four or five other groups of houses with a hundred or less, a few logging camps and an occasional solitary homestead. A ribbon of road winds up the valley, not far from the railway, but peters out before it reaches the pass at its head; only the railway leads through to the country beyond. One priest, set down at Blue River, has thus to serve a few hundred people strung out over more than 150 miles, with one precarious unmetalled road or a scanty train service as his means of reaching them.

There is "frontier" country also over towards the east, for instance where the long narrow strip that is the diocese of Brandon runs up into the north of Manitoba. Here a notable work is done by a band of "Bishop's Messengers", women working as a community from St. Faith's House, Swan River, and in several smaller outposts. Over the widespread districts committed to them they visit, teach, hold services, and give help in poverty or sickness; a

"travelling priest" follows up their work, giving the Sacraments as regularly as he can.

Down in the basement of St. Faith's is the "bale room", filled with clothes and stores of all kinds that have been sent for distribution to those who need them: as the winter comes near, those shelves need to be piled high. But even in summer there is plenty of use for them. We go out by car on Saturday afternoon some fifteen miles into the country. Here are farmers hard put to it to keep their heads above water while hard winters, poor harvests and the loss of stock threaten to overwhelm them. Consider the case of a man with a large family of young children, a poor farm and uncertain health. Working hard through the summer, he gets enough vegetables to feed his household and lays up a little store for the winter. His field crops are scanty, and his stock of winter fodder so short that he has to sell all but a few of the cows by whose milk he hoped to make a living. He loses one or two more by disease during the winter. It means all but starvation for the whole family, unless help is forthcoming; and how can they buy warm clothes or blankets with which to face "40 below" zero during the winter?

The Messengers come upon many cases such as this: they help them with food, with clothes, with medical care; and they do it, not just as dispensers of charity, but as real friends. And the help is received in the same spirit; there is nothing demeaning about it. A mother, to whom we delivered a big bale of much-needed clothes for her children, went straight off to her bit of garden and set the boys to pick some peas for the Messengers; they had given her what she lacked; she had something which she could give in return; it was all quite natural between friends.



The Sunday programme of St. Faith's is a very jig-saw puzzle to arrange. There are services morning, afternoon and evening in a number of different centres; four or five Messengers to distribute among them at the right times and places, and only one capacious and long-suffering car, supplemented by those of the two priests stationed at Swan River, so far as they can lend a hand. Into the car we pack Mona, the aptly named portable harmonium, a folding altar, boxes of hymnbooks, Sunday School gear, food supplies, and three or even four human beings. The local roads shake the load down after a bit. Twenty miles out in the country we stop at a school-house, set by a group of trees at a road crossing. A congregation of some thirty people have gathered here, half being children; a couple of well-worn cars have brought some of them a long distance. The school is being rebuilt, so we cannot use it, and under the trees willing hands fit up the portable altar, unfold Mona and arrange benches and boards for seats, where the branches give a little shade from the blazing sun. Someone has brought flowers to adorn the altar; it is a lovely focus for our worship under the vaulted canopy of the trees. So we begin our Eucharist, with plenty of hymns and a sermon, during which the children slip away to have their own lessons seated on the grass round a big Sunday School picture. Afterwards they return, and the Eucharist continues; and the handful of communicants (not all the congregation are Church people) kneel reverently on the grass and receive the Blessed Sacrament. Under God's sky and sun and trees He seems nearer than even in a building hallowed by years of worship.

After the service there is much talk and exchange of news; then the cars fill up and move off and we are left to our picnic lunch under the trees, till our own car returns

and carries us off to a Community Hall ten miles away, where again a crowd of forty has gathered. It is like some small parish hall in England, with benches and chairs set sideways along one wall, facing towards a makeshift altar opposite. We use a shortened evensong, Mona once more leads the hymns, and the children go out for their lesson during the sermon. It is a hot afternoon and the hall is stuffy, but the service is hearty and has a ring of reality not always to be heard in more formal settings. Talking with the people afterwards, we hear that one has given a piece of his land as a site for a church, and that if only they can raise a bit of money they will set to work and build it. And all of them speak of England as "home", though few expect to see its shores again. Gradually the crowd melts away, some by car or buggy, for they have come from miles around. The Messengers sort themselves out into other cars, and go off to yet other centres for later evening services.

No picture of the Church's work in Canada would be complete if it omitted the most notable community work in the country, that of the Cowley Fathers at Bracebridge in Algoma. It is not strictly "frontier" work, for the Bracebridge district, a long strip lying between the lakes of the Muskoka country, is an area which has seen prosperity and then lost it. It was lumber country; while the lumber was being cut it prospered; churches were built and good work was done in them. But when the forests were exhausted the mills closed, and a sprinkling of people were left to scrape a living out of scanty fields and thin soil. The parochial system broke down for lack of money to support it.

Then in 1928 a few Canadian members of the Society of St. John the Evangelist (to give the Community its proper title) came to the half-built house that had been



A WELCOME BALE: SWAN RIVER.



VESTRY MEETING: HATTONFORD.



CHURCH AND PARSONAGE: WHITE FOX.

[Facing p. 39.]

offered them at Bracebridge. They had to meet not a little suspicion and some hostility, for they brought a new standard of Churchmanship. But they brought also a friendliness, a devotion, a sharing of poverty, a message of good cheer, that soon won the confidence and affection of the people. To-day, with numbers increased, and lay brothers and postulants added to their household, they serve from the House at Bracebridge some thirty centres strung out over a long district, in twelve of which there are churches, many of them built by their congregations. In them the Church is vigorously alive; the whole population gathers to them. In winter the Fathers tramp out on foot, day after day, round their districts; in summer they are helped by two cars. They engage in much manual work, on the farm attached to the House at Bracebridge, which is a model for the district, and in printing, weaving, carpentry and other occupations. Their life is of extreme simplicity and centred in the daily worship in their beautiful chapel. Visitors come for the peace and devotional life afforded by a stay in the Guest House. Expenses are met by a grant of one salary from the diocese, and by the many donations, mostly of small sums, that come as a tribute to the work that is being done. The common purse has often seemed almost empty, but always the means to continue have been provided.

Close by, a group of the Sisters of St. Margaret are housed, and carry on work among the women and girls.

Bracebridge and Swan River alike suggest that the answer to many of the problems of the prairies and of the frontiers may be found in groups working out from a centre to cover large districts, but coming back to share a common devotional life, and to enjoy mutual counsel and society.

## V

### INDUSTRIAL CENTRES

FOR most people the name "Canada" calls up two other words, "prairies" and "wheat": we are accustomed to link these three ideas together. But "Canada: rocks: minerals"—that is an unfamiliar set of words, which does not spring naturally to mind. Yet it may well push the other group into the background, for many believe that in her mineral wealth the future prosperity of Canada will be most securely based. For the Church, the discovery and development of Canada's minerals provides equally a problem and an opportunity; the problem of the sudden growth of big (and not always permanent) industrial townships, and the opportunity of quickly establishing in them self-supporting Church life. The tragedy of the situation is that, owing to the poverty of the Church, she is often too late to seize the opportunity and fails to use it effectively.

The great rivers of British Columbia, with their full waters and steep fall, offer magnificent power for generating electricity, of which so far very little use has been made. But driving down the Kootenay river valley from Nelson, one passes three points where the foaming river is dammed and harnessed to generate electric power, which is then carried down to the great works at Trail, close to the U.S.A. frontier, of the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company. Trail is a strange sight,

a bit of Sheffield thrown down in the midst of a Swiss valley. The forests and rocks, the river rushing through them, the heights rising above and behind, might be one of the lesser valleys of Switzerland or the Jura: suddenly out of it rises a group of tall chimneys, above vast workshops and furnaces, dim in a smoky haze; the works stand on a tongue of land between the valleys, in which houses are clustered. The road descends dizzily by hairpin twists right through the works to reach the town below.

Here years ago, while "Father Pat" won the rough miners of Rossland in the hills above to respect the Church and love their priest, ore was brought down for smelting to the valley, whose forests were sacrificed to the furnaces. But organising genius has now harnessed the river for power, and by the aid of research has built up a great industry equal to any in the continent, which to-day employs 4,500 men, and by the most modern processes extracts every kind of mineral from the ore, and even turns the once noxious by-products into fertilisers. Trail lives and grows, while the mining areas that supply it with ore rise and fall. Rossland to-day is dead as a mining centre; it lives on as a residential refuge from Trail; Kimberley and other places away in the mountains now mine the ores that feed the furnaces of Trail.

So the Church has its double problem: to provide fully for the large numbers that will—it seems—be centred permanently at Trail; and also for those less lasting groups that mine the ore—yesterday at Rossland, to-day at Kimberley, and to-morrow who knows where?

Canada again is rich in stocks of coal, which as yet are largely undeveloped. Some of it, as at Drumheller in Calgary diocese, is soft stuff that soon breaks up into

dust, and so is only worth mining when it is in immediate demand. This means irregular work, and almost a standstill in the summer; and there is great unemployment and poverty among the miners.

The best coalfields are up in the Rockies, between Edmonton and Jasper. Here vast seams of coal come right to the surface: one of them claims to be the second widest seam in the world, measuring 92 ft. The whole field is a strange pocket of industry shut off in a remote group of mountain valleys, to which (hitherto) there has been no access by road, but only by one railway of remarkable slowness.

The one train of the day puffs lazily out of Edson, its two passenger cars tacked on to an immense line of empty freight cars. Leaving the main line, it winds up through a country of swamp and forest into lovely hills, the slopes ablaze with scarlet lilies and "Indian paint-brush". Snow-flecked heights rise ahead, and towards these, after a long wait (and welcome time for lunch) at Coalspur junction, we slowly climb, passing two or three pit heads, with the homes of a hundred or two workers gathered round each. At last we reach the biggest centre, Cadomin; the seventy miles have taken us five hours, and we tumble out with relief. Our train will go off up another spur, before it returns to complete its journey past Cadomin to the valley's end at Mountain Park.

Cadomin is a grey collection of depressing wooden houses, spread over a stony valley floor and up one of its enclosing sides. The fifteen hundred souls who live here, miners and their families, look up to the mountains that tower above them, but from their valley they have no escape into the outside world—it costs a day each way, and a good sum of money, to get to Edmonton by train.



Up here, 5000 feet above sea level, the winter is bitter, and the winds come tearing down the valley from the snows above. So it is again at the other chief centres. Mountain Park, 1000 feet higher up the same valley, has a fresher outlook and pleasanter housing, but is even harder to escape from ; Luscar, up a side valley, Foothills and Sterco, to which on alternate days the train diverges from Coalspur junction—each have their groups of three or four hundred people, living a life cut off from the outside world and its interests, yet with good wages and leisure hours. It is not surprising to be told that a high proportion of the wages is spent in drink, and that Satan finds plenty of mischief to fill idle hours and minds.

How great is the need for the Church to be in among the people ; not only giving them a faith to live by, but helping them to use their leisure well, and providing good occupation for body and mind. Most of all do the younger lads and girls need friendship and guidance.

Several of the leading men of the managing staffs are keen supporters of the Church, and have pleaded with the diocese to make proper provision for the " Coal Branch ". But hitherto it has never seemed possible to do this. The Coal Branch has been attached to the parish of Edson, away at the railway's end, but the priest at Edson already has his hands more than full. Once a big effort was made for some years ; three little churches were opened, halls were used elsewhere, congregations were gathered. Less happy days followed, the work fell back and one of the churches was sold. But the faithful few held on, and to-day the vigorous young priest at Edson is bravely trying to revive and maintain the work, though it is a burden beyond any man's strength to carry for long alone. If the money could be found for a few years

to provide a full-time priest to take charge of the district and develop the work, it should soon become self-supporting. And as Canadian industry develops, there will surely be a growing demand for her coal, and a secure future for her richest coalfield.

Water power, coal, oil : Canada has all three in plenty. The discovery of oil is a new development. Only a few years ago a geologist declared that in the country just south of Calgary, oil ought to be found ; in the Turner Valley, a rolling country of grassy hills, not far from the Duke of Windsor's famous " E.P. Ranch ", borings were begun ; and at last in 1936, after several disappointments, the first strike was made. Now a forest of derricks breaks the sky line, squat silver tanks sprout everywhere like mushrooms from the ground, beside the refining sheds, and in waste ground near by iron pipes stick up from the surface, blowing great flares of flame up into the air—the waste gases from the refineries. Seen at night, it looks a weird inferno ; the heavy smell of oil hangs always over it, and sometimes drifts on the wind down to Calgary and beyond.

The Turner Valley oilfield may soon develop still more ; already thousands of people have flocked there, and in the sloping valleys rows of half-painted wooden shacks jostle one another along the road ; saloons and pool rooms, stores and cinemas, beauty shops and cafés side by side, while living-houses cluster behind. Money comes easily, and as easily goes—on a car, or wireless, or a refrigerator, or a smart dance dress ; but it does not flow so readily to the Church, which has only been able to entrust the care of these newcomers to the two nearest parish clergy, each at some distance, and each already occupied with a full-time job. " Little Chicago " and

" Little New York ", as the new townships are labelled, need a resident priest to give his whole time to them ; but the means and the man cannot be found.

Soon Turner Valley may not be the only oilfield. Oil is known to be present not far from the Coal Branch in Edmonton diocese ; oil is betrayed by strange gases which bubble up through the water at Peace River in Athabasca ; oil has been found and tapped far to the north on the Mackenzie River. More tasks for the Church may arise at any time.

But of all Canada's mineral wealth the most exciting at present is her gold. It is not a new discovery ; gold brought a rush of fortune hunters to Cariboo and to the Yukon a generation ago, and gold has since been found and worked in the rocky wilds of Ontario. Nor is gold the only valuable metal ; silver is there too, as at Cobalt ; nickel has long been worked round Sudbury ; of copper and other metals there is plenty. But the recent rise in the price of gold has made it worth while to re-open mines that had largely ceased working, and has sent prospectors off into remote places to find and open up new fields of gold-bearing rock. So to-day has its " gold rush ", bringing sudden groups of population to uninhabited places. But there are no nuggets to be picked up, no fortunes to be made overnight ; modern gold-mining follows scientific methods which involve expensive machinery, and employs a staff of experts directing a body of skilled labourers.

At Kirkland Lake, away north in the diocese of Algoma, is the beginning of a long reef of gold which extends for fifty miles to the east. The gold-bearing vein of quartz seems to run for fully 6000 feet perpendicularly into the ground ; one mine has already sunk a shaft to 6400 feet,

the deepest in America. At every 150 feet galleries are cut into the hard rock, following the vein of quartz. From these the miners work upwards, boring with pneumatic drills and blasting out the rock; then the waste is run away and used to fill the cavities that have been worked out, and the rich quartz is brought to the surface, where the most modern methods extract the precious metals that it contains.

We visited one of the largest of these mines. Clad in boiler suits and gum boots, with "tin helmets" to cover our heads, we took our places with some of the men in the "cage", and were lowered to the 3600-foot level. Guided by our miners' lamps, we splashed along the dark, cool tunnels in the rock, tramlines under our feet, electric wiring and pneumatic piping above our heads. Heavily timbered workings disappeared into the gloom above. The vein of whitish quartz, coloured with yellow and brown, could be followed in the rock. Sounds of distant thudding told of men operating the drills. Up one short gallery we found two men at work, driving with their drill a ring of twenty holes round a great block of quartz; 70 lb. of explosives would then be put in and fired to dislodge it. With an ear-shattering roar the pneumatic drill drove its head steadily into the hard rock. In another gallery, looking closely, we could see the gleam of gold in the quartz; our guide hammered off a flake and showed us patches on its surface shining with a dull yellow glitter.

Gold-mining is scientific and skilled work to-day, and at such a place as Kirkland Lake is done under the very best conditions. Several of the mines have been in production for a long period, but the recent boom in gold has led to a great increase; the "Township of Teck" (as the

area is called) has grown in population from 5000 to 20,000 in the last ten years, and still increases at the rate of 2000 a year. Yet it is very carefully regulated and controlled; the authorities try to prevent an influx of casual labourers looking for jobs, they keep a firm hold on dance-halls and drink, they build up a strong *esprit de corps* in each mine; they maintain good wages and good housing. Most miners own their car and many their house.

The gold boom has led to the opening of many more mines out along the reef, where they may be seen in all stages—the tent of the prospector looking for a good new proposition; the new mine shaft, where only the first few hundred feet have yet been sunk; the established mine, already in production and beginning to pay. It is an uncertain life; perhaps the company that first opens up a new shaft fails; a second, or even a third, may take up the work and at last make good. At Larder Lake a new township is growing, to house the miners in these new districts. It has several streets of new stores and cinemas and restaurants and garages, with pretentious frontages; behind, where the forest is still but half cleared away, wooden houses, rough shacks, caravans, and even tents, provide dwellings for the miners. The Roman Catholics and the United Church have quickly put up their places of worship; the Church of England still waits; the only priest within reach is at Kirkland Lake, 20 miles away, where he already has 20,000 people in his parish. Larder Lake cries out for active work, but there is no means to send another man; so it stands attached to Kirkland Lake—an impossible task.

By way of contrast, and perhaps warning, we may take a glimpse at Cobalt, sixty miles to the south of Kirkland

Lake, and for long a great silver-mining centre, with some fifty mines in operation. But now the rich ore is worked out and the price of silver has fallen, and Cobalt is a ghost of its former self. Only two mines are doing any work, and that on a small scale. Mine buildings have been pulled down, several have been burnt to the ground. A few gaunt, depressing shaft-heads stand, with their buildings idle round them. The Church, once crowded and vigorously alive, now gathers only a faithful remnant, and that has to be served by the priest of a neighbouring parish. That is the fate that falls sometimes on once-prosperous places. Kirkland Lake looks like continuing ; it should not be another Cobalt ; but a change in the gold policy of the nations might upset the whole balance of life again ; the Church takes its risks, as others do, when it opens up work and spends money on buildings in a mining area.

But while the sun shines, prospectors make hay, and out in the wilds of the north-west lie the new centres where the modern romance of mining is being enacted. Goldfields, Yellowknife, and Great Bear Lake are the names on men's lips.

Goldfields lies just within the borders of Alberta, on the northern side of Lake Athabasca. On my southward flight from Aklavik the 'plane called there to re-fuel and take up a passenger, and I had a brief glimpse of it. Rocky headlands, covered with forest, enclose a small bay into which the 'plane descends, skimming the tree-tops. About a mile away, on either side, big corrugated iron buildings cover shafts sunk into the gold-bearing rock, where two mining companies are developing work. The larger has 250 men engaged on mining, and 250 more erecting a hydro-electric plant. Round the bay the

mining town is growing with ungainly speed. There is no road as yet ; but several bare wooden hotels, food stores, a barber's shop, restaurants and the foundations for a cinema and for large petrol tanks. The forests have been partly cleared to build shacks for the miners, but some still live in tents. Piles of lumber, drums of petrol, and all the litter of a place in the making lie around : I noted behind one restaurant a great pile of empty beer bottles and cartons. One of the hotels announces " Ice Cream To-day "—my 'plane has brought it 500 miles from Edmonton ! There must be well over a thousand people gathered there ; the nearest settlement is a hundred miles away ; and but for the air services, which operate regularly winter and summer, they would be cut off from the outside world. Even by air it is a day's flight from Edmonton.

Just before my chance visit, the Church had at last found it possible to send a priest there. He has a stiff task before him to gather a congregation, find a meeting place, and in due course build a church. But such a centre cries out for the Church's care.

Yellowknife, on the Great Slave Lake, 400 miles further north, is another and newer Goldfields to which hundreds of miners are making their way. But so far the Church has been unable to place a priest there. And on Great Bear Lake, furthest north of all, are the Radium Mines from which to-day Canada provides two-thirds of the world's supply of radium. The pitchblende is mined and reduced to heavy concentrates ; these are packed in bags and carried on barges away down the Bear River and up the Mackenzie ; twice they have to be transhipped past rapids ; at last they reach the rail at Waterways, a thousand miles to the south, and start on their

journey right across the continent to Port Hope, near Toronto, where the radium and other minerals are at last extracted.

So on Bear Lake too a big group of miners is established ; but again, all that the Church can do is to put them under the charge of the priest at Fort Norman, sixty miles away ; and only when some rare chance offers can he find any means of getting to them.

Here is a most difficult yet urgent problem. Mines are being started, more may at any time spring up, in distant corners of the vast uninhabited north-west. They are the very places where the witness and help of the Church is needed ; but without funds to meet emergency needs it seems impossible to answer the call.



## VI

### ORIENTALS, INDIANS AND ESKIMO

THE Church in Canada has always had a missionary work for non-Christian people within its own borders. The land of forest and prairie into which the white settlers entered was occupied by the Red Indian tribes, while away in the north the Eskimo hunted and fished on the shores of the Arctic seas. In addition to these aboriginal peoples, there have come in, among the immigrants, many Jews; and on the Pacific coast Chinese and Japanese have settled in large numbers. Among all these the Canadian Church carries on work.

The Mission to the Jews, directed by a special committee under the M.S.C.C., works in the cities of Eastern Canada, with its centres in Montreal and Toronto. I saw nothing of this work, and so do no more than record that it is carried on.

Of the Oriental Missions in British Columbia I had an all-too-brief glimpse. Their chief centre is Vancouver, where there is a considerable population of Chinese and of Japanese, mainly in one or two districts of the city. The Chinese—tireless workers who live very cheaply—excel in market gardening, and have gained a strong hold on that important industry; in many parts of British Columbia one sees their neat fields, planted with mathematical exactness and carefully irrigated, and often amid them a line of dark, stooping figures planting, tending or

weeding, even under the blazing midday sun that would drive others to rest ; sometimes they work on after dark by the light of lanterns. They specialise in laundry work too, and in many a little prairie town the " China-man's café " can be depended on for good food, ready at any hour. But China is still their home, for many of the Chinese men-folk come across the Pacific to work, and send their earnings back to support their families. Chinese families settled in British Columbia are comparatively few—though important—and there is a pathetic remnant of older men, unemployed or sick, who will never return to their country, and need protecting care.

In Vancouver is the Church of the Good Shepherd, a mission to the Chinese ; it includes an attractive little church and an adjoining hall, which is used for school and other purposes. There on a Saturday morning I found a happy group of some two dozen tiny children, too young to go to the Government elementary school, enjoying the games and action songs of a kindergarten. Their dark eyes glanced up shyly at the stranger, taking him for the medical inspector who dispenses nasty medicines. But once that fear was removed they became all smiles and friendliness, and sang their songs, and trooped out laughing and chattering into their playground to be photographed. Most were not of Christian families, but through the children the Church makes friends with the parents, and some are brought into its fellowship.

On Sunday the Church gathers its congregation, some of whose younger members give very active help. Theirs is not an easy life ; the family influence and strong traditions of China pull them one way, their western education and the new ways of their adopted country pull the other.

The Church does a fine work, too, for the care of the old and infirm and destitute. There are many who get temporary work on the gardens and fruit farms in summer, but drift back to the city in winter. In its hostel the most needy cases are looked after, and others are provided with food. The magistrates and public authorities trust the Church workers in dispensing relief, and in dealing with police-court work.

Among the Japanese, who usually bring their families with them, and so are likely to stay and to increase, the Church has two centres of work in Vancouver, the Holy Cross Mission and the Church of the Ascension. At the former, another group of tinies were enjoying their kindergarten action songs and games—are any children in the world more fascinating than these dark-eyed, shyly smiling little people? The Church of the Ascension has been beautified and extended by the work of its own members, and is equipped for a vigorous young club and social life, as well as for its Sunday worship and its week-day kindergarten.

Though Vancouver is the chief centre of the Missions to Orientals, there are outposts in Victoria and up the Pacific coast, and a little centre in Vernon, where workers on fruit farms and market gardens have formed a small Chinese quarter. The S.P.G. takes some share in the Oriental work, by a grant made to the diocese of New Westminster.

The Church's work among the Indians dates back, as we have seen, to the earliest days of immigration into Canada. There are still very large numbers of Indians on

Reserves in Ontario, and Brantford shows how well they have been cared for, and how great a service the Church has done among them.

Out west on the prairies, and up north amid the forests and lakes, are many other Reserves, and the Church has taken its full share in the care of the tribes which are settled in them. There are fine residential schools, such as those at Elkhorn or Cardston or Lytton ; there could hardly be a better-equipped hospital than that recently built by the diocese of Cariboo at Lytton. The work has not, of course, been so long established as in the east, but it has had time to wield a great influence, especially upon the younger generation.

The Bishop of Saskatoon took me on a visit to two typical Reserves of the Cree tribes, not far from Battleford. Both lie in pleasant and well-watered farming country, with open stretches of grass land, dotted with copses of tree and bush. We motored along tracks so deeply rutted that the driver had to watch his course with care, fearful for the bottom of his engine.

High on a grassy ridge, in the middle of Little Pines Reserve, stood a beautiful wooden church, white painted ; and beyond it a school and houses for the staff. Below, several Indian families had pitched their tents. Just at that time, as it chanced, the tribe had gathered a few miles away for their " Sun Dance ", a traditional pagan festival of rain magic, which the old people maintain, though the Christians and younger people take no part beyond watching it. The school was on holiday too ; but for the Bishop's visit the tribe came trooping back, and soon a congregation of some forty folk were gathered, women on one side, men on the other, while the boys and girls of the school, in cassocks and surplices, provided a well-

trained choir. The white missionary, and a young Indian deacon, led the service.

The Indian does not betray emotion ; it was a strangely impassive congregation that listened to the Bishop's address, responded to the prayers, and joined in the soft and plaintive singing, for which some used the Cree language, and some English. But there is no question that Christianity has proved a great influence for good among them. Of its power we had further evidence at the school, which has become, through the genius of its head-mistress, a model for other day schools in the Reserves. The children, rather casual by nature, have learnt to attend regularly, to love their lessons, to do admirable handwork, which has won many prizes, and to take up useful home industries, such as spinning and knitting ; as a further step forward, a big weaving frame, just sent by the Education Department, was waiting in its packing cases to be assembled and brought into use. And with all their work they learn the Christian faith and life, and will bring a new spirit into the new generation of their tribe.

The road into the Red Pheasant Reserve, next day, was still rougher, and quite difficult to follow, as it wound through meadows of uncut grass, and plunged into mud-holes among patches of forest. Of human habitation there was nothing to be seen, till suddenly the track broke out into a clearing, where stood a little white wooden church, and three or four huts, the homes of Indian families. Beside them stood tents, for in summer the Indians prefer to move out from their houses, and live under canvas. But this was not the church that we were seeking, and for another few miles we bumped along, and just at the right hour emerged again at an open glade,

where another church stood on rising ground, and under the shade of the surrounding trees horses were tethered and wagons parked ; a crowd of Indians had gathered, and were waiting for their Bishop's arrival.

They filed into the church, and filled it ; this was a Confirmation service, with two Indians and the teacher's daughter to be confirmed. All was in English, for there has been long and faithful work here, since the days of the great Archdeacon Mackay, fifty years ago. There was no choir to lead, but the singing was hearty, and there was a true sense of reverence and worship. And afterwards we heard from the veteran missionary, Canon Sheasby, and his wife, how great an influence for good the Church has been, strengthening the many fine qualities native to the Indian people, and controlling and correcting their weaknesses and failings.

Reserves have a meaning only where white settlement has come ; the great North-West Territories and the Arctic have no need of them. Here scanty groups of Indians, and on the Arctic shores the scattered Eskimo tribes, wander as they will ; but they centre their lives more and more upon the far-flung posts where the Hudson's Bay Company has set up its stores to trade with them, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police has posted its men to watch over them.

Something of all this I saw in a flight from Edmonton to Aklavik and back. Flying has revolutionised life " down north ". Once the only means of access was by great barges towed and poled along the rivers. Then stern-wheel river steamers took up the task, pushing huge loads slowly down the winding Mackenzie River, and plodding back slowly against its stream. Winter then stopped all movement, except by dog sledge over the deep snow.



ROAD-MAKING NEAR MAFERING.



STUCK ON A TREE-TRUNK !

[Facing p. 56.]

THREE  
MONTHS'  
JOURNEY  
TO FIND  
A NEW  
HOME.



*Illustration by Wm. H. H. H.*



To-day the S.S. "Distributor" still noses her way, pushing heavily-laden barges before her, down from Fort Smith to Aklavik, and drops off precious supplies at each point along the river. But over her fly aeroplanes of several competing services, carrying not only passengers and welcome mails, but heavy goods, and even machinery; and from Edmonton you can reach Goldfields in a day, Yellowknife or Bear Lake in two days, and Aklavik in half a day more. And they fly in winter too, using skids instead of floats, so that even the ice and darkness of the winter do not cut off the Arctic posts from the life of the outside world.

It was an amazing flight. Rising from Cooking Lake, near Edmonton, the 'plane speeds away north, over a jigsaw picture of farms and woods and lakes; but soon the farms fade out, and all is forest and rock, lake and stream and swamp. The great river is picked up at Fort McMurray, and becomes the guide for the rest of the journey, as it passes through two huge lakes and winds in slow brown curves away and away northwards. As far as eye can see there is green wilderness; water, water everywhere—pools and lakes and winding streams, old channels that have become backwaters, swamps where the gleam of water shines through the green of grass or rushes. Wherever there is earth there are trees; rocks emerge here and there, but for the most part the ground seems flat, save in one stretch where rocky hills close in from the east, and distant ranges loom to the west.

And it is all empty. For two and a half days we flew, and saw no sign of life, except where, at every 150 miles or so, a "Fort" of the Hudson's Bay Company stands on the river bank or lake shore. Then we would look down on a cluster of white houses, with red roofs and window

frames, and perhaps a group of tents. Sometimes we flew on, sometimes we swooped down, slid to rest on the river, and sidled in to the shore. A cautious step across a plank, a climb up the river bank, and there lies the settlement ; neat enclosures surround the Company's store, the " Mounties' " barracks, and the wireless station ; beyond lie a dozen or more wooden houses and some tents, belonging to Indians who have come in to trade, or to get their " treaty money ". There may be a big Roman Catholic hospital or school, with a church ; and sometimes an Anglican church and parsonage—at Fort Norman, the old wooden church in which Bishop Bompas and other heroes of the past held services.

The priest in charge at such a post ministers to the few Church-people who are stationed there (and they are constantly changing), and to the Indians who come in from time to time ; he may be able to gather some in a school and teach them ; occasionally he may have a chance to visit them up the rivers where they camp and hunt and fish. It is a lonely and a hard life, yet he is " holding the fort ", and the very solitude of his people makes his work for them the more valuable.

So we flew on, resting for two nights on the way. My visit was timed to bring me to Aklavik, the centre of the western half of the Arctic diocese, in time for " Rat Sunday " ; my companion, Dr. Ellis, had given his holiday, and travelled all the way from Toronto, to offer his services as dentist in the dental clinic just fitted up in the hospital at Aklavik. Others shared the flight, on business or pleasure bent.

But forest fires had delayed our 'plane from starting. It was after midday on Sunday when a sudden downward swoop announced our landing, and below we saw, strung

out along a dark bank round a hairpin bend of the Mackenzie River, the red roofs and white buildings of Aklavik. We swished down on to the river, and taxied in to a pontoon. A voice hailed from the bank, "Come along, they are waiting for you in church!" I stumbled out, was greeted by the missionary priest in charge of the school, and hurried in the hot sunshine along the river-bank, to the beautiful wooden church of All Saints. There the Indians were ending their choral service of Holy Communion. (In that land of midnight sun, they go to rest after midnight, and get up towards midday; it is their morning!) During their closing hymn, sung in their Loucheux tongue, their churchwardens gathered their offering—muskrat skins, worth two shillings apiece, often in bundles of two or three or four. "Rat Sunday" is their harvest festival. Indians and Eskimo hunt the muskrat, and at midsummer come in to trade the skins and buy provisions. And both hold a service of thanksgiving, at which they offer skins as their gift to God.

So the skins were gathered up, in great piles, and we received and offered them at the altar; and I spoke a few words, which the Indian lay-reader interpreted. Then the service ended, and they poured out into the sunshine outside, and there was a great handshaking.

But now the Eskimo trooped up for their service; more in number, wearing as "Sunday best" their cleanest and brightest "parkas" of white or yellow, they were a smiling and happy crowd. Men sat on one side, women on the other; little children ran to and fro, but no one was disturbed by them. With brighter singing, and with the same deep sense of reverence, the service moved to its height, and very quietly, row by row, men and women came up to receive Communion. Once more, at the

close, the Eskimo wardens gathered the gifts of their people, and an even larger pile of skins was brought and offered. The Eskimo lay reader interpreted my words ; the service ended ; and once more there followed a great gathering and greeting outside. There can be no friendlier people in the world than the Eskimo, and none with broader smiles.

Aklavik is their centre, but not their home. The Indians, with their canoes and tents, wander and fish and hunt up the rivers of the delta ; the Eskimo, in their stout little ships, hunt the white whale along the coasts from their fishing villages. In winter, if life is rougher, travelling overland is easier, for the lakes and rivers are frozen hard. From time to time they come into Aklavik, and three times a year, at Christmas, Easter, and " Rat Sunday ", all who can possibly do so gather there, and hold their special services of Communion.

The church, built by Indians, serves also the white residents, traders, Mounties, and radio staff, as well as the missionaries. On its altar hangs a beautiful frontal of white, panelled with orange, and brightly embroidered ; it is the gift and the work of Indian Christians, made of moose-skin, and embroidered in porcupine quill.

Beyond the church lie the other buildings of the Mission ; the hospital stands next, a fine wooden building of two storeys, with some 30 beds, replacing the smaller hospital that was burnt down in 1936. Its operating theatre, its well-fitted dental clinic, would adorn any English country hospital ; the cheery children patients whom we visited showed how happy a place it is, under the care of a devoted staff.

On beyond stands the school, where some eighty-five boys and girls, Indian and Eskimo, are housed and taught ;

dormitories and playrooms are like those of a good English boarding-school. The specimens of handwork, including drawings of local birds and flowers, proved that these children have natural gifts equal to any ; and the boys' gymnastic display, presented for our benefit on the muddy flats above the river, showed that their physical well-being is not neglected.

The work of the Arctic Mission is spread right along the northern coasts of Canada, across and beyond Hudson Bay. There are other churches and schools, other hospitals that serve the needs of remote but not forgotten people. Seeing Aklavik at midsummer, when at midnight the sun blazed well above the horizon, and the heat was like an English summer's day, it was hard to realise what the darkness and cold of winter must be like. But the workers speak cheerily of it ; though the thermometer falls to 40 or 50 below the zero mark, furs and well-warmed buildings keep the cold at bay ; though the sun never rises, the stars are brilliant, and the " northern lights " quiver in the sky. They love their work, and it is work worth doing.

They asked me, " What do you think of Aklavik ? " I had no doubt of my answer : " It is the sunniest place I ever saw," I said ; but much of that sunshine is there in the darkest days of winter, for it is in the hearts of that devoted band who work for God among the Indians and Eskimo of the far north.

## VII

### HOMEWARD BOUND

OUR Canadian journey is over, and we turn back homeward—bringing what memories and what claims ?

Picture after picture rises in the mind, of men bravely attempting tasks almost impossible. Of the prairie priest setting out in his car, day after day, Sunday after Sunday, to bring the sacraments and the worship and the comfort of the Church to a number of little groups or lonely households, scattered over an area as big as a county ; yet knowing that for all his efforts there are many whom he cannot reach. Of the " frontier " priest, following rough trails through forest and swamp to track out newcomers and offer them such help as he can ; or trying to find food and clothes that may carry some destitute family through the bitter cold of winter. Of the priest with a parish and district that demands all his energies, called suddenly to shoulder also the charge of a new mining camp that has sprung up thirty miles away. Of the priest in some distant, solitary post, with a handful of white people, and a few groups of Indians occasionally gathering to his church.

The Church has been forced to stretch its organisation and staff to cover far more than they can compass. Parishes were big enough, and clergy few enough, in all conscience, in the years that followed the Great War. But then came two disasters ; the slump in world trade

reduced the Church's power to give, and the years of drought on the prairies drove many of the farmers, stripped of all but their courage, to seek new homes on the frontiers of settlement. The prairies remained, their people fewer and less able to give; and new districts needed the Church, but could give no help to maintain it. With reduced resources, the Church had to try to cover far wider ground than before.

That is the dominating impression to-day; a Church, with means severely limited, trying to cover an ever-expanding area. Its resources are stretched to breaking point—and sometimes beyond. The work is often splendid, but under such strain it cannot bear its full fruit.

What is the right solution for this difficulty? What ought the Church to do about it?

First, how far can the Home Church come to the rescue with personal service by men and women? The Canadian Church seems to desire, for the most part, to train its own clergy in Canada, and to supply many of them from its own sources. It does not wish to revive the "five-year scheme", by which English clergy went to Canada for five years, and then returned to England. "We want," said one Canadian priest, "only men who can say, 'Here will I dwell, for I have a delight therein.'"

The Church has nine Colleges, most of which are attached to Universities; and in them students usually take, first, their Arts course, and then their training for ordination. The whole course may last six or seven years. Commissaries and Societies in England pick a certain number of young men, and send them over to take their training in Canada.

The system has its weaknesses; but it enables men of very limited means to follow their vocation, and enter the

ministry of the Church. Many work very hard during the long University terms, and then take up some employment in the summer vacation, to earn enough to cover their next year's fees. Young men from England, with the grit to face six or seven years of strenuous preparation, may follow this road into the Church's ministry in Canada.

It is not so easy for women in England to find ways of service in the Church in Canada. Teachers cannot now be taken straight into the teaching profession in Canada; they must pass through a Canadian training. The Fellowship of the Maple Leaf, which formerly developed this line of service, now supports the invaluable groups of Bishops' Messengers, of whose work we saw an example at Swan River. But for this, and for the Sunday School Caravan and Post work, special qualifications are required, and the numbers needed are limited.

Secondly, in regard to money, it is obvious that the Church in England will want to give immediate help. The Church folk of Canada are giving with wonderful generosity; the people of the prairies, during the eight years of drought, have often shown amazing self-sacrifice. Many of them went out from among us; very many still look back across the seas to this as their "home". Our money can help to maintain the Church's work among them. It can reach them through the General Fund of the S.P.G.

Again, Canada needs not only living agents, but buildings. There can be little secure Church life until there is a building to worship in. Willing hands are often ready to do the work, but cannot find the means to buy materials. The S.P.G. can give some help out of its Marriott Bequest, but cannot provide the whole cost;



here is something which may appeal to generous hearts and purses.

But is all this enough? Is not some constructive plan needed that will secure the future? What are we really trying to do for Canada?

If you want to build a house, you must first put up a scaffolding; within that the new walls go up; when they are completed, and the new house stands by itself, the scaffolding comes down.

The S.P.G. has always aimed at providing the scaffolding for the living Church. Its task is to build the Church of God in Canada or China, Borneo or Madagascar. Men and money must be sent out at the start, and for many more years. But their purpose is to build up a Church native to the country, which will in the end provide its own clergy and teachers, its own churches and schools, perhaps its own doctors and hospitals, and maintain them out of its own funds. The "scaffolding" can be taken down gradually as this is achieved.

In Canada this has already happened, over large areas. The S.P.G. first helped the early Loyalist settlers in the Maritime Provinces and Ontario with men and money, schools and churches; they have now become self-supporting, and help to support others. Then the S.P.G. moved its help westwards; new cities were being born, such as Winnipeg and Regina, Calgary and Edmonton, Vancouver and Victoria. The S.P.G. helped them in their early years; now they, too, are self-supporting. So the S.P.G. has passed on to help the prairies and the frontiers; will the same thing happen? May we expect that in ten or twenty years' time they too will need outside help no more?

In the hopeful days before the Great War, many

thought that this would happen ; to-day few would dare to expect it, over great areas of Canada. There are parts of the prairies, and even of the frontiers, where prospects are exceptionally good, and populations exceptionally thick. But over much of the prairies, most of the frontiers, and many of the wide spaces or worked-out areas of Algoma and Keewatin and Moosonee, farming is not likely to make rich and regular profits, population is thin, and only a small proportion are Church people. The authorities of the Church in Canada believe that there are large areas of this kind which cannot expect to become self-supporting within any measurable period.

If that be so, the right way to provide for them is not by annual grants, but by endowment. So it was that when delegates of the Church in Canada, headed by its Primate, came to confer with the S.P.G. at Farnham Castle in 1937, they agreed to launch a scheme for a great "Sustentation Fund" of £100,000, to be raised jointly by the Church in England and in Canada, and held by the Canadian Church, which should eventually replace the recurring grants now made annually from the General Fund of the S.P.G.

In broad outline, the plan is this : Canada and England set themselves to raise £100,000 by the year 1953 (in fifteen years) : the M.S.C.C. undertakes £40,000 of this total, the S.P.G. £60,000. In the meantime, the S.P.G. continues its General Fund grants, which amount to £6400 a year, less a small percentage diverted into the Sustentation Fund. When that Fund is completed, the S.P.G.'s recurring grants will be withdrawn ; in their stead the Church in Canada will have a permanent endowment to allocate. Any difference between the old income from S.P.G. grants and the new income from

endowment will certainly be made up by the increased strength of M.S.C.C. funds.

This is a scheme that should surely appeal to Church-people of vision and generosity, both in England and Canada. In Canada it will be launched when certain other big commitments are out of the way ; in England, the S.P.G. is already anxious to make a start, and will welcome contributions towards it.

If this little book has at all achieved the purpose for which it has been written, it has shown a gallant people, in a truly great setting, ministered to by a most courageous and devoted clergy. Can our Church, so richly endowed by our forefathers, do less than help Canada to give permanence to the Church's work by ensuring the success of the appeal for this Sustentation Fund? Early gifts will not only give a start to the Fund which the Society has set up, but will enlarge themselves by the addition of interest during the years in which the Fund accumulates.

Does this scheme mean the complete withdrawal of S.P.G.'s help, at the end of the fifteen years? That was not the intention of the S.P.G. The Farnham Conference agreed that, not later than the end of the fifteen years,

“ the whole position shall be reviewed, the M.S.C.C. and the S.P.G. declaring their desire to continue thereafter their fellowship and co-operation in furthering the growth of the Church of England in Canada.”

The future will depend on the position of the Canadian Church. That Church does not wish to live on the gifts of the Old Country ; it is eager to carry its own burdens. It knows that the S.P.G. has urgent appeals from many

other parts of the world. If, when the time comes, prosperity is so far restored in Canada that no further help is needed from England, Canada will certainly say so. Or it may be that urgent needs will still remain; S.P.G. grants may be asked for such work as that in new mining districts, where help for a few years will lead to self-support. After two hundred years of partnership, the Church in England will not fail the Church in Canada, if it still has to ask for support.

In the meantime, the General Fund grants must go on year by year; and it must be kept up at least to its normal level, to ensure this. Gifts can be earmarked for Canada, if the donors desire to do so.

Lastly, there is one all-important way in which we can all help, and help greatly. Canada wants the understanding sympathy and the prayers of the Church in England. Many of her people live isolated lives, and face deep anxieties. They think longingly of the Old Country and old friends. Dwelling amid many of other sympathies, the strong French Roman Catholic element, and the numerous groups of non-British immigrants, they feel the more keenly a loyalty to the nation and Church of their birth. Nowhere were the Christmas broadcasts, in which King George V spoke to his people, heard with deeper emotion than in Canada. No people were more intent to hear and share the Coronation Service.

They want our friendship and our sympathy; and for Christian people friendship and sympathy find voice above all in prayer.

Tradition tells that when the negotiations were going forward which led to the union of all Canada and British Columbia in one, there was much discussion of the title which the united country should adopt. At last one of



INDUSTRIAL CANADA.

[Facing p. 68.]

*Above* : The Works at Trail.

*Below* : Flumes for Gold Washing, near Greenwood.



A  
NEW  
HOMESTEAD.



[Facing p. 69.]

those present opened his Prayer Book, and turning to Psalm 72, read the eighth verse : " His dominion shall be from the one sea to the other ". " The Dominion of Canada," he said ; " let that be our name." The title was chosen, and it enshrines for ever an ideal and purpose in the hearts of her founders, that " from the one sea to the other " Canada's people shall acknowledge the Divine rule.

That purpose will guide our prayers for Canada. Journeying across the continent " from the one sea to the other " one sees again and again much for which to give thanks. The settled provinces of the east show the fruits of the faithful work done in early days in face of much hardship and difficulty. The prairies prove that the Church within our own days has tackled similar tasks in the same spirit. The problems of to-day are immense, but the Church of to-day is not daunted by them. The pioneer spirit endures in a country that is still young. Settlers go out to " make good " by hard work, rough living, and perseverance. The Church has that spirit too : the tradition of Mountain and Bompas, of " Father Pat " and Stringer, lives on to-day. Our prayers must be with our fellows of the Church in Canada as they bravely struggle to hold and to win their land for the Kingdom of God.

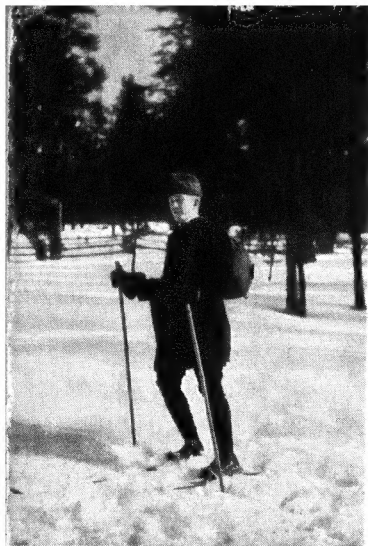
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S.P.G.  
S.P.C.K.